



**Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity**

Pat Quinn, Governor

December 31, 2013

Dear Governor and Members of the General Assembly:

The Employment Opportunities Grant Program (EOGP) (20 ILCS 605/605-812) requires the Department to administer a grant program to expand employment opportunities for targeted populations in eligible grant areas in Illinois, and report to the Governor and the General Assembly on the activities undertaken by awardees. For your review, please find below a program summary and a list of 2013 activities taken to optimize efficiency and execution of the EOGP.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

EOGP is administered by the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity's (DCEO) Office of Urban Assistance. After addressing challenges from the last several fiscal years, the agency is focused on administering its current funding allocation of \$1,250,000.

The goal of EOGP is to prepare targeted populations - minorities, women, homeless, long-term unemployed, veterans, youth aging out of foster care, and ex-offenders - to enter and complete building trades pre-apprenticeship programs, apprenticeship programs, and/or obtain employment in the building trades industry.

In April 2012, EOGP hired a full-time program manager to focus on the success of the program. Through a strengthened program, EOGP was able to release a competitive Request for Application (RFA) for FY14. Sixteen applications were submitted, and these applications are currently under review.

PROGRAM MODEL

The current EOGP program model continues to focus on the core fundamentals of the building trades industry by providing program participants with exposure to the technical skills, basic soft skills, and on-the-job training deemed necessary to be successful in the building and construction industry. This knowledge and understanding of the industry will enable many program participants to become self-employed entrepreneurs, continue their education, and obtain careers in the building trades and/or construction industry.

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PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Cumulative EOGP Performance Measures

# of individuals accepted into a program	528		
# of individuals who complete a program	313		
# of program completers accepted into apprenticeship program	58	19%	Percentage of program completers
# of program completers placed in building trades employment (union and/or non-union)	41	13%	
# of program completers entering non-union non-building trades employment	40	13%	
# program completers becoming self-employed entrepreneurs	17	5%	
# of program completers continuing education	32	10%	

These numbers reflect grants that began in FY11 and were subsequently extended through the end of May 2013.

Qualitative Results

Program participants who successfully complete their EOGP-funded training program are armed with the skills necessary to enter a building trades apprenticeship program or building trades employment, and ultimately have increased opportunities in jobs where they can earn a living wage. This, in turn, impacts the Illinois economy by creating a stronger pipeline of trained workers who are able to obtain and keep jobs in the building trades industry. Opening these doors increases diversity within this industry and prepares more individuals for careers in a vital field, which will help keep the workforce strong and competitive and provide better opportunities for Illinois' working families.

GRANTEE SUCCESSES

FY11 grantees who received supplemental grant funding were able to demonstrate outstanding success stories this calendar year as highlighted below:

- Through one grantee's partnership with a building trades union, program participants received technical training at the union training facility. Upon successful completion of a 12-week pre-apprenticeship program, program completers were afforded the opportunity to take the test for the building trades' apprenticeship program. Thirty-six completers then entered a 9-week apprenticeship program. Upon completion, they become first year apprentices.
- Through one grantee's program, after successful completion of the 8-week program, project participants earned 8 transferable college credits in construction management and 7.5 non-transferable college credits, making continuing education an easier pathway.
- Based on the strength of their program and the funding from the EOGP grant, one grantee was able to leverage an additional \$100,000 in matching funds from Chase Bank.

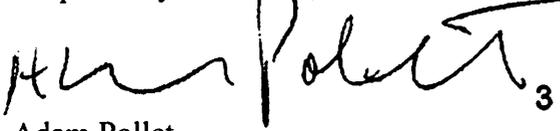
FY13 GRANTEE

Grantee	Address
Public Building Commission of Chicago <i>CPS-School Investment Program</i>	50 W Washington, Suite 200 Chicago, IL 60602-1440

DCEO was able to provide a \$200,000 grant with FY13 supplemental funding.

The DCEO's Office of Urban Assistance has implemented a number of changes that have strengthened EOGP. These changes include implementation of fiscal and programmatic guidelines, revised reporting forms, increased communication with the grantees, revised RFA evaluation criteria, and the reintroduction of the consortium in FY14 to maximize the partnership among grantees, DCEO, construction contractors, and organized labor that is the heart of this program. Our primary objective remains ensuring program participants who successfully complete their EOGP-funded training program are armed with the skills necessary to enter a building trades apprenticeship program, building trades employment, and have increased opportunities to jobs where they can earn a living wage.

Respectfully submitted,



Adam Pollet
Director